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11. (U) SUMMARY  
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---Voter Registration Campaign Update  
---Supreme Court Host Conference on Penal System  
---Independence Day Inaugurations, Honors and Celebrations  
---Ambrosio de Lemos Appointed as New Chief of Police

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Voter Registration Campaign Update  
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12. (U) After nearly two weeks of voter registration, numbers registered have exceeded government expectations. In Luanda province more than 62,000 eligible voters have successfully registered. In Huila Province, more than 15,000 have received their cards and in Uige Province, more than 12,000, despite the small number of centers open in each capital city. CIPE Coordinator Virgilio Fontes Pereira visited Lubango, Huila, on Tuesday, November 28, 2006, where he encouraged Angolan citizens to register. At the same time, he chastised illegal immigrants for trying to register following the apprehension of five Congolese citizens who were stopped during the registration process when they presented suspicious statements from personal witnesses. More extensive reporting on Elections/Voter Registration Campaign can be found in Reftels A (First Day of Registration) and B (Electoral Process November Update).

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Supreme Court Hosts Conference on Penal System  
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13. (U) Supreme Court Judges, all provincial and municipal judges, public attorneys and prosecutors as well as Ministry of Justice senior staff met between November 7-10, 2006 to brainstorm on how to improve Angola's penal system. Minister Manuel Aragao chastised judges and public prosecutors for holding detainees in custody beyond the 135 days maximum number which is allowed by law. He noted that in Luanda over two-thirds of the prison population are detainees awaiting trial. Minister Aragao urged judges to expedite cases brought before the courts. The president of the Supreme Court Cristiano Andre called on judges to take their vocation more seriously. However, he admitted that the court system was wholly under staffed at all levels, thereby causing the excessive backlog of cases. The final communiqu called for the recruitment of judges and qualified court staffers and the creation of municipal courts in every municipality of Angola to help expedite justice and uphold the rule of law. Angola has 164 municipalities, but only 24 have functioning municipal courts. In September 2006 the Supreme Court swore-in 34 new municipal judges in an effort to get the municipal court system working. Currently there are 9574 prison inmates in Angola of which 4,900 are detainees.

14. (U) The USDOC through its Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) has worked with the Ministry of Justice to implement a case management system to improve judicial case tracking and random assignment of judges to cases. CLDP has implemented this system and trained court officials in Luanda, Cabinda, Benguela, and Huila provinces. In FY06 CLDP will continue the "train the trainer" training in order to build capacity within the Angolan Ministry of Justice.

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Independence Day Inaugurations, Honors and Celebrations  
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15. (U) President Dos Santos inaugurated the new fleet of five Boeing airplanes bought by TAAG Angola Airlines as the key Independence Day Event (Reftel C). During the ceremony, numerous GRA ministers reiterated to Ambassador Efird the GRA's interest in maintaining strong commercial ties with the US, expressing their appreciation for US-made products and services, and the importance of good bi-lateral relations. Otherwise, Angola's National Day celebrations were relatively low-key with the "official GRA ceremony" occurring in remote Cunene province, and presided over by Labor Minister Pitra Neto. The theme of all the celebrations was "infrastructure rebuilding." In all provinces, governors inaugurated social infrastructures projects, in particular schools, health centers, bridges and electric generating stations. Dos Santos also inaugurated the new communal markets system by visiting "Asa Branca," one of the new community markets in a Luandan suburb built by the Chinese under the Chinese-Angola bilateral credit line.

16. (U) The President hosted a formal dinner for approximately 200 guests, including the diplomatic corps, but did not give a speech, as was customary in other years. He bestowed National honors on six eminent Angolans: Desiderio Costa; Mendes de Carvalho; Adriano Sebastiao; Afonso Mahunda; Aristides Van Dunem, and Jose Manuel Lisboa for their contribution to the Nationalist struggle. Desiderio Costa was a member of the first MPLA leadership council and is currently the Minister for Petroleum; Mendes de Carvalho is an outspoken octogenarian Parliamentarian who served a fifteen-year jail sentence for denouncing colonial oppression in 1959; Aristides Van Dunem was Angola's first Minister for Finance. The others are relatively unknown figures.

17. (U) Dos Santos also conveyed Military Honors on Generals Ciel da Conceicao "Gato;" Daniel Prata "African;" Santana Andre Pitra "Petroff;" Alexandre Rodrigues "Kito;" Mario Cirilo de Sa "Ita;" Antonio Jose Maria, and Manuel Helder Vieira Dias "Kopelipa" for service to the peace conquest. General Kopelipa received four National Honors in one year, a record in Angola. General Petroff now serves as Special Adviser to the President for Political Affairs as well as head of CNIDAH (National Commission for Humanitarian Demining). With exception of Generals Kopelipa, Petroff and Maria, who is the head of Military Intelligence, the others are Generals who served in the first Republic and are now retired.

18. (SBU) Comment: Aside from the purposeful showcasing of the new TAAG airplanes, attended by nearly all key GRA government figures, GRA commemoration of Angolan National Day was very low key in comparison with previous years. The Government chose to make reconstruction its Independence Day theme, inaugurating social infrastructure projects, instead of throwing its usual grand parties. This is a likely consequence of the local media criticism heaped on the GRA in 2005, which accused the government of spending huge amounts of money on celebrations rather than concentrating on reconstructing the devastated country. End Comment.

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Ambrosio de Lemos Appointed as New Chief of Police  
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19. (SBU) President Dos Santos appointed Ambrosio de Lemos Freire dos Santos to take over from Jose Alfredo "Ekuikui" as Commander General of the Police on November 6, 2006. General Ambrosio de Lemos most recently served as Deputy Commander General of the police, and is expected to continue his predecessor's effort at modernizing the police force, improving professional standards and encouraging respect for human rights. Although, highly respected in the police

force and by Human Rights activists, General Santos was an unexpected choice, since he is due for retirement. A career police officer, General Ambrosio de Lemos knows every officer and every aspect of the police force.

¶10. (U) Biographic Information: General Ambrosio de Lemos (three stars) was born in Luanda on January 9, 1945. He left high school in 1962, joined the colonial police militia in 1966 and in 1970 joined the colonial civil service. In 1974 he joined the MPLA and formed part of the first corps constituted of Angolan police officers. He was appointed provincial police commander to Luanda and in 1975 made police commander to Huila, Cunene and Namibe provinces simultaneously. In 1979, General Ambrosio de Lemos was appointed to the Commander General's office as head of planning and analysis and head of operation for the police. 1989 General De Lemos took charge of the public order division of the police and served in the Joint Commissions of both the Bicesse and Lusaka Protocols. In 1993 he was made Chief of Staff to the Commander General of the police and in 2002 Deputy Commander General.

Efird.